



HJ0129

LRB095 20853 NHT 49661 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, There is compelling evidence that persons with low  
3 education face diminished opportunities and inferior economic  
4 and personal well being; compared to high school graduates,  
5 dropouts earn less, pay less in taxes, and rely more on public  
6 health, criminal justice, and welfare services; and

7 WHEREAS, Less educated workers are more likely to suffer  
8 from heart conditions, strokes, hypertension, high  
9 cholesterol, depression, and diabetes, as well as from a range  
10 of behaviors that contribute to ill health, such as smoking;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The probability of incarceration for black male  
13 dropouts is at least 60%; and

14 WHEREAS, High school graduation reduces crimes by 20% for  
15 murder, rape, and other violent crimes; by 11% for property  
16 crime; and by 12% for drug related offenses; and

17 WHEREAS, Black adolescent males in the United States face a  
18 far more dire situation than is portrayed by common employment  
19 and education statistics, a flurry of new scholarly studies  
20 warn, and it has worsened in recent years even as an economic  
21 boom and a welfare overhaul have brought gains to black women

1 and other groups; and

2 WHEREAS, Several recent studies by experts at Columbia  
3 University, Princeton University, Harvard University, and  
4 other institutions focusing more closely than ever on the life  
5 patterns of young black men show that the huge pool of poorly  
6 educated black men are becoming ever more disconnected from  
7 mainstream society and to a far greater degree than comparable  
8 white or Hispanic men; and

9 WHEREAS, In the country's inner cities, the studies show,  
10 finishing high school is the exception, legal work is scarcer  
11 than ever, and prison is almost routine, with incarceration  
12 rates climbing for blacks even as urban crime rates have  
13 declined; and

14 WHEREAS, In the year 2000, 65% of black male high school  
15 dropouts in their 20's were jobless, that is unable to find  
16 work, not seeking it, or incarcerated; by 2004, the share had  
17 grown to 72%, compared with 34% of white and 19% of Hispanic  
18 dropouts. Even when high school graduates were included, half  
19 of black men in their 20's were jobless in 2004, up from 46% in  
20 2000; and

21 WHEREAS, Alvin Poussaint, a professor of psychiatry at the  
22 Harvard Medical School in Boston and author of several books on

1 African-American issues, links the problems of joblessness and  
2 violence to education; further, he associated that with an  
3 increase in the number of black men who are in prison; with  
4 unemployment, many look for alternative ways for making money,  
5 and unfortunately that leads to a lot of anti-social and even  
6 criminal behavior; and

7 WHEREAS, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. established the  
8 "Go-to-High-School, Go-to-College" program in 1922, which  
9 concentrates on the importance of completing secondary and  
10 collegiate education as a road to advancement; and

11 WHEREAS, Statistics prove the value of this extra impetus  
12 in making the difference in the success of young  
13 African-American men, given that school completion is the  
14 single best predictor of future economic success; and

15 WHEREAS, It is through the Go-to-High-School,  
16 Go-to-College educational initiative that young men receive  
17 information and learn strategies that facilitate success;  
18 Alpha men provide youth participants with excellent role models  
19 to emulate; and

20 WHEREAS, The Go-to-High-School, Go-to-College educational  
21 initiative is a program counseling youth on the importance of  
22 post-secondary education while introducing them to promising

1 professions; through the program, students and their families  
2 are provided information about college entrance and financial  
3 aid; the counseling thrust is augmented by a vigorous  
4 scholarship program for college-bound youth; and

5 WHEREAS, The members of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.,  
6 both current college students and college graduates, many of  
7 whom are professional educators, are uniquely positioned to  
8 give the proper insight and perspective to the problem of high  
9 school dropouts and can play a leading role in developing  
10 solutions to reduce the skyrocketing high school dropout rate;  
11 therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
13 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE  
14 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity,  
15 Inc. Go-to-High-School, Go-to-College Task Force is created to  
16 study the causes and effects of the high rate of high school  
17 dropouts and the low college retention rates among  
18 African-American males; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the task force shall consist of 5 members  
20 appointed by the Speaker of the House and 5 members appointed  
21 by the President of the Senate, all of whom shall serve without  
22 compensation but shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and  
23 necessary expenses from funds appropriated for that purpose;

1 and be it further

2       RESOLVED, That the task force shall meet initially at the  
3 call of the Speaker and the President, shall select one member  
4 as chairperson at its initial meeting, shall thereafter meet at  
5 the call of the chairperson, shall receive the assistance of  
6 State Board of Education staff, and shall file a report of its  
7 findings and recommendations for legislative action with the  
8 General Assembly on or before January 1, 2009; and that upon  
9 filing its report the task force is dissolved; and be it  
10 further

11       RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
12 delivered to Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the State  
13 Board of Education.